**Museums Advocacy Day 2017**

**Publicity Tools**

**General Op-Ed**

At their core, museums of all types and sizes are educational institutions. Museums all across the country are essential to our educational infrastructure, investing more than $2 billion annually in educational programs for people of all ages. But most of our focus is on PreK-12 students, including more than 55 million visits to museums by American schoolchildren each year. For homeschoolers, museums are often quite literally the classroom.

At the [name of museum], we offer an array of educational programs for our community. [Cite local examples.]

Museums are also economic engines, driving considerable economic activity nationally and here in [name of locale]. In direct expenditures alone, they inject $21 billion into the U.S. economy and employ roughly 400,000 people. Museums are a key component of the $171 billion cultural tourism industry; research shows that museum visitors spend more and stay longer than other tourists, boosting our local eateries, hotels, and other [name of locale] businesses.

Here in [name of locale], the economic impact of our museums is considerable. [Insert local stories and stats. You can make an impact with just a few key pieces of data. See some samples on the Alliance [website](http://www.aam-us.org/advocacy/resources/economic-impact-statement/samples).]

We have this impact because museums continue to be extremely popular. The American Alliance of Museums estimates that U.S. museums welcome 850 million visits annually, more than the attendance at all major league sporting events and theme parks combined. Our attendance at the [name of museum] is [cite numbers].

Museums also play another invaluable, if a bit less tangible, role. Museums everywhere collect, preserve, interpret and exhibit our national heritages—historical, cultural, natural and scientific. Where else can you go to see [list a local treasure or two] than here in [name of locale’s] museums? Visitors of all ages can be transformed by their experience or interaction with an historical object, a specimen or by a work of art.

These are some of the reasons why the museum field will converge on Capitol Hill February 28 to make the case for museums to our elected leaders. If you appreciate our museums here in [name of locale], you can lend your voice to this effort. Visit the American Alliance of Museums’ website ([www.aam-us.org/advocacy](http://www.aam-us.org/advocacy)) to find customizable messages to Congress that you can send with just a few clicks.

All of us at the [name of museum] are deeply grateful for the support the citizens of [name of locale or region] have shown us over the years. We want to continue and expand our public service to you. Please join us in telling Congress how much you value your [name of locale] museums.